A SPLENDID TOY THAT WILL IMITATE THE NOISES OF ALL THE ANIMALS IN THE FARMYARD GIVEN AWAY INSIDE.

No. 1,461.

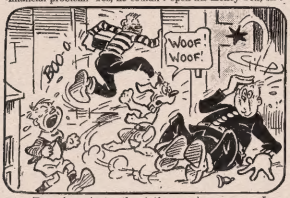
THE COMICAL CAPERS OF CONSTABLE CUDDLECOOK!

NOVEMBER 9, 1929.

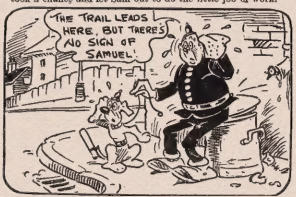
1. Dear Mr. Editor, My Rollicking Old Rocket,—Early on the morning of the Fifth a young customer walked into the station and asked my assistance in solving a complicated financial problem. Yes, he couldn't open his money-box, sir!

2. Naturally, that young youth wanted money to buy fireworks, and when Sam, the champion safe-cracker, offered his help I knew that I had found the right man for the job. So I took a chance and let Sam out to do the little job of work.

3. But it seems that Sam had been doing a little headwork, sir. He'd certainly struck a striking notion, as I can tell you! Yes, I had the point rammed home to me, sir! That bad lad donged me on the dome with the money-box and then fled!



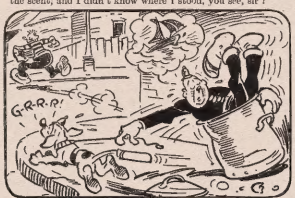
4. For a few minutes the station was in an uproar, I can tell you! There was me sitting down all tired and feeling dizzy; there was Bobbie, my hound, barking like mad; and there was the youth yelling like anything over losing his cash!



5. Well, I knew that I had to pull myself together and do something towards getting Sam back home again. So I took my hound and started tracking. But suddenly Bobbie lost the scent, and I didn't know where I stood, you see, sir?

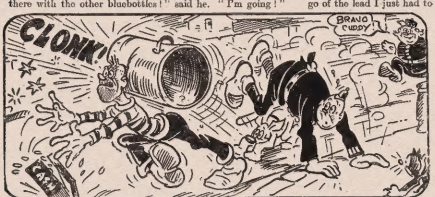
6. So I sat myself down to think matters out, and the next tick I received another set blow. Yes, I'd parked myself right on the very dustbin in which Sam had hidden himself. 'Cos bad lad did a chuckle—and a murky chuckle it was, old sir!

7. The way I kissed the pavement brought back that dizzy feeling again, sir, and whilst I was feeling so all of a heap Sam picked me up and dumped me in the bin. "You get in there with the other bluebottles!" said he. "I'm going!"



8. And away he went, sir. That might have been the last I ever saw of him if it hadn't been for my terrier tec, Bobbie. Bobbie started to give chase, and as I was too dizzy to let go of the lead I just had to follow my frisky hound, sir.

9. That was a bit of luck for me, really. Yes, as Bobbie dashed off, the lead pulled me and the dustbin over, and soon I was going after Sam in a roundabout way. That old lad was still chuckling, but my turn to laugh was soon to come!



10. Yes, in the very short space of two ticks or so I had caught Sam up. The dustbin did a handy old bounce on a loose stone, and with a thud I landed on my hands and knees, whilst the bin went on and gave the bad lad the heartiest old dong on the dome he had ever had! There and then he did a few grunts, closed his baby eyes, and went to sleep!

11. And so I recovered the kidlet's money-box, managed to open it, and helped the little lad choose his fireworks. He was so pleased with me that he insisted upon having his fireworks in the station yard, and a good time was had by all—except Sam, that is! Yes, I'm afraid that Sam felt too much of a guy to be happy.—Yours, CONSTABLE CUDDLECOOK.

"JUST WE THREE"

You will find laughter and tears in this human story of the adventures of two homeless brothers and their girl chum. START IT TO-DAY!

"Three's Company."

LEFT friendless and alone in the world by the death of their mother, young Joe Blake and his five-year-old brother, Jimmy, took shelter from the rain one miserable night in a back-garden shed.

They were found there by a girl of about Joe's own age who lived in the house near by—a girl whose sweet face and wistful eyes made an instant appeal to Joe, especially when he learned that she was as lonely and miserable as he and Jimmy, and cruelly treated by the old woman with whom she lived.

On a kindly impulse, Jess—for that was her name—stole out to the shed with some supper for the boys, and then crept back to the house. But before Joe and Jimmy had started on the welcome and unexpected meal, there came from the open door a scream of pain, followed by the sound of blows and the shrill, grating voice of Mother Wrench, thick with anger.

"You little thief!" Joe heard her cry. "Where's that supper? Eh, where is it?"

In a moment Joe was on his feet, while little Jim had risen, too, clutching his hand and trembling with fright.

"Joe," he whispered in a frightened voice, "it's somebody hitting that little girl! She's crying, Joe!"

Joe did not answer. His eyes were fixed despairingly upon the square of light which was the open door—on the slim shadow of the fragile girl who was cowering under the brutal attack.

"Oh, don't—please don't!"

The pitiful cry went through him—and then again there came that shrill croaking:

"Answer me, you little thief! Where is that meal I gave you?"

Joe's cheeks went crimson as he realised what had happened. It was her own supper which Jess had brought them; it was her own goodnature which had brought this storm of abuse and blows upon her. It was a shame—a cruel shame. He could not bear it. He bent quickly over his little brother.

"Jimmy, wait here—wait!"

He sprang out into the littered yard and leapt for the door.

"Hi!" he shouted. "Leave her alone! Stop!"

But his voice was drowned by the shrill shouts of Mother Wrench, and the door was slammed suddenly in his face and the light shut out.

He stood there, his limbs quivering, as a heavy bolt was slammed inside. He heard the sound of footsteps retreating, and the harsh voice died away into a low muttering.

Gloomily he stole back to the shed where little Jim was waiting.

"Joe, let's go! Please, Joe! I—I don't like that old woman!" Jimmy faltered.

"No! No!" Joe muttered. "But you're all right, son. She won't hurt us. Here, what about some pudding? You must be ever so hungry. Come on; it's fine!"

He pretended that he didn't start in on the meal which had cost poor Jess so much to bring. He could not eat himself, but just stood in the doorway, his eyes brightening as he saw a light appear in a broken back window at the top of the gloomy house. Then a slim figure appeared against the light and two hands screen a pale, wistful face, peering down. He sprang out and waved his hands eagerly.

"Jess!" he called in a loud whisper. "Jess!"

She turned away into the room. She had not heard him, and he knew that he must be invisible in the pitch darkness. But she was not. He could see her figure dimly, sitting by the bed, her head in her hands, the picture of sadness.

The light of the upper window fell on a gutter-pipe running close to the sill, and the sight of it gave Joe an idea. He sprang forward and groped about the brick-face until he found it, then began to climb swiftly and nimbly, as he had often climbed the old ventilator-pipe for fun in the school playground. A few minutes and he was level with the sill, leaning over till his fingers touched the glass. He tapped. Instantly a startled face appeared at the window, and he made a quick sign. He saw Jess reach up excitedly, and, with a rather terrifying creak, the window went up very slowly.

"Jess! It's only me—Joe!" His voice was low and eager as she stepped out breathlessly. "Did she hurt you—that old woman?"

"No, not much. It—it was about the supper," she whispered unsteadily. "I didn't think she'd miss it."

Joe's eyes shone indignantly. He could see the wool across her pale face where Mother Wrench had hit her—could see the marks of the tears upon her cheeks.

"Is she always like that?" he asked.

"Yes. She's awful. Sometimes I—I wish I was dead!" Her voice broke pitifully. "You don't know what it's like."

"But why do you stay, Jess?" he urged. "I wouldn't. Why don't you run away?"

"I'm going to—one day. I've been saving up for weeks." Something of Joe's eagerness had crept into her low voice.

"Then why not come with me and Jimmy. We've run away, too. Let's go together—just we three."

He saw her face light up and her hands tremble on the sill.

"But—but where can we go, Joe?" she whispered.

"Anywhere!" His voice was low and urgent. "It doesn't matter. I'm sick and tired of streets and houses; we can go to the country. It'll be fine there."

Her eyes grew bright and wistful at the thought of green fields and bushes that she had not seen since she was a baby. Suddenly the look of fear returned as there came a sound of stairs creaking and a muttering, cracked voice. It was Mother Wrench, coming up.

"Quick, Jess! Come on; I'll help you!" Joe whispered.

Almost before she realised it, she was out on the sill and trembling as she held tightly to the rain-wet pipe.

"Don't be afraid! Grip with your knees!" Joe's low, eager voice below gave her confidence. "Now, come on!"

Trembling, she slithered down the pipe and dropped into the muddy yard below. Joe's hand was thumping joyfully as he seized her ice-cold hand and drew her quickly into the shelter of the shed. Jimmy was looking up with round eyes, wide with wonder.

Joe chuckled.

"What do you think, Jimmy? Jess has run away, too. She's coming with us. Isn't it—" He broke off suddenly and peered across the shed. Jess had dropped on to her knees, and was scraping feverishly in the dirt. "What's the matter, Jess?"

She did not answer for a moment, and Jimmy, pressing forward curiously, saw her lift a small bundle from the hole she had made. He heard the chink of coins, and gasped as he turned excitedly to Joe.

"Look, Joe! Quick! It's gold! Jess has dug it up! There's heaps—heaps! Shall I get some, too?" he cried.

He was on his knees, too, scraping excitedly at the dirt with his fingers. Jess smiled, though she was pale and breathless.

"It isn't gold, Jimmy," she said. "I only wish it was. It's only pennies I've been saving up. I brought them here and hid them, in case I—I——"

She stopped and gasped with fright as the shrill voice of Mother Wrench came from the now deserted back-room.

"Where are you, eh? I'll give it to you, my lady! What's this window open for on a wet night?"

Trembling, she saw the beat figure of the old woman, peering out with little hawk-like eyes which seemed to penetrate the darkness. She seemed to be looking straight at them.

Joe saw her turn, with a grunt, and shuffle out of the room. He spun round quickly, hoisting Jimmy on his back.

"Quick, Jess! I believe she knows! She's coming out!"

He caught Jess by the arm, and her little store of treasure chinked in the bundle as he drew her to the door of the shed. A gust of wind hurled the rain into their faces, but they fought forward against it.

Suddenly there came the rattle of a bolt, and a column of light jutted out from the back door, which flew open violently. For an instant two figures could be seen—swift shadows darting for the gate. A croak of surprise and rage broke from the old woman, who burst through the doorway.

"Stop her! Stop, thief! Come here! Hi!" she shrieked as she stumbled across the yard.

But when she reached the narrow alley at the back there was no shadow, except that of the broken fence. The only sound was that of the rain beating down upon the cobbled road.

One thought only was in the minds of Joe and Jess—to get as far away as possible from the wretched house where they had left Mother Wrench shrieking after them in the darkness.

Three Adventurers.

FOR an hour the lonely trio trudged on through the rain, one thought only in the minds of Joe and Jess—to get as far away as possible from the wretched house where they had left Mother Wrench shrieking after them in the darkness.

When they paused at last in the shelter of a dark railway arch the fear of being pursued had gone from Jess' grey eyes. Her face was eager and excited. Joe, too, grinned as he set Jimmy down on to his feet. His spirits had refused to be damped by the soaking rain.

"Well, Jess, are you glad now you came?"

"Yes, ever so. I've always longed and longed to live in the country." Her voice was quick and excited. "I've got an aunt who lives in the country, but she was too poor to keep me when mum died. That's why I went to work for Mrs. Wrench."

Jimmy flopped up from his seat on the pavement.

"How big is the country, Joe?" he asked.

"Oh, ever so big, son!" said Joe, with a wink at Jess.

"Big as an elephant?" asked Jimmy.

"Rather!" said Joe, with a chuckle. "Bigger!"

"How do we get there, Joe? Do we walk?" Jimmy went on.

"That's what I've been wondering," Joe muttered. "I suppose we'll have to walk, unless we can get a ride. Maybe we can get a lift on a train," he added to Jess.

"A train?" She looked doubtful. "But that would cost a lot!"

"Not if we travel 'goods.' I've got an idea," he said. "I think we'll try it, anyway. Come on!"

Once more he hoisted Jimmy on to his back and moved off, talking to Jess in low tones as they passed through the arch and turned along a road which was separated from the railway by a high fence.

Suddenly Joe paused, and Jess looked at him expectantly.

"Is this the place, Joe?"

"Yes. There's a big siding here, always full up with goods trucks. It'll be dry, anyway, under the tarpaulin."

A glance right and left showed the road dark and deserted, and, with a jump and a scramble, Joe drew himself on to the top of the fence. A few moments and Jimmy was over, gazing round wonderingly at the shadowy forms of trains and trucks and steel rails glistening in the rain. Another minute and Jess was over, too.

"This way, Jess! Follow me and Jimmy!"

Swiftly and quietly he picked his way across the lines of rails, ducking under the buffers of carriages, then turning and peering upwards as he walked down a line of trucks, loaded ready for transit. Some were stacked high with bricks, others with machinery. Presently he paused by one which was not filled to the shed. A huge tarpaulin. Joe's eyes brightened.

"This will do. Come on!"

In a few minutes they had scrambled, all three, under the big cover, and were crouching upon the floor of the truck. It was dry there, at any rate, and after a bit of exploring they came back with a couple of sacks, to make travelling more comfortable.

"Here, Jess! There's more room in this corner. Come on, Jimmy!" he whispered. "What have you got?"

Jimmy held up something gleefully, something which had fallen, it seemed, from a broken bale of hay.

"An apple, Joe. A beauty!" Jimmy said, preparing to devour it. "Want a bite?"

With a smile, Joe leaned over and took it from him, replacing it on the floor.

"Sorry, Jimmy," he said. "That's railway property, not ours. When we get down into the country I'll buy you an apple if you want one. I dare say there will be plenty there if—if——"

He stopped suddenly, and his face went pale as there came a sound of whispered voices outside the truck. He turned to see Jess' eyes, startled, upon him.

"Joe, there's somebody out there! Who——"

"Sh-h!" Joe put up a finger for silence, and then drew back with a gasp of alarm, while Jimmy cried out with dismay.

With startling suddenness one end of the big tarpaulin had been thrown aside and two men sprang nimbly into the truck.

"Ready!" said one of them in a low, quick tone. "Right away!"

With almost feverish haste they began to empty the truck, passing over the side the small cases with which the truck was packed. Joe could hear the soft footsteps of other men outside, bearing them away. A third man came over the truck-side, and a torchlight swept the wagon. Jess crouched lower, but it was too late. A grunt of anger and surprise broke from the man.

"Hallo! What's this, eh? Who are you? Here, Slim! Quick!"

Joe was caught by the arm and dragged out, and Jess the same, while a third hauled the trembling figure of little Jimmy into the torchlight. For two seconds there was third uneasy. They conferred in a low tone before the man with the torch spun round on them.

"Now, then! What have you been up to, eh? Pinching?" he rasped.

Joe's face blanched.

"Me! Pinching! We—we just took shelter here out of the rain!"

"Rain, eh? Yes, I know!" The man chuckled unpleasantly. "I've heard those tales before. Mo and my friends here are railway detectives, and we know what you're up to. Come along with us!"

With a hand behind him Joe by the arm, signalling the others to take charge of Jess and Jimmy. Jess, with bright, indignant eyes, threw a motherly arm about Jimmy.

"It's all right, Jim," she said, with a break in her voice. "We—we haven't been stealing. Wh-where are you going to take us?"

"Ay, what's the idea?" whispered a fourth man, coming up quietly. "Are you mad, Slim? Where are we going to take 'em? We can't be lumbered up with waifs and strays!"

"Don't you be so sure," Slim muttered. "This is a stroke of luck, and the old 'un will be delighted. These kids are going to be very useful to us, and you can take it from me. Get on, there!"

And, with a grunt, he thrust Joe down over the side of the wagon.

(What will happen to the three chums who have fallen into the hands of a gang of thieves? Don't miss the thrilling instalment in next Saturday's JESTER.)

9-11-29

SON of a GUN-MAN

A Great New Story of a Western outlaw who, filled with remorse, tries to save his young son from the six-gun trail. You can START TO-DAY.

* * * *

Flaming Guns!

GUNS! Guns! And a Ranger posse on his heels!

To this his six-guns had brought Glyn Harding. No wonder he raised his eyes to high Heaven and solemnly cursed the two revolvers that hung at his waist.

The posse at the valley end ahead of him effectually barred all escape that way. Behind him the men from Star City pressed doggedly on his trail, relentless in their hunt of the outlaw who had failed in an attempt to hold up their bank, and who had left a dying man as evidence of his gunmanship.

Before Sonny filled the soul of the gunman; never before had he hated his skill with his deadly weapons.

In those brief days of happiness which his wife had shared with him, Glyn Harding had regretted his past; had wished that he had never taken an outlaw trail. Mary had comforted him and bade him forget the past in the future, and quickly he had begun to live down the evil reputation that had begun to grow up around him.

Then Mary had died, was taken from him just when life promised rosiness. Fate's cruel blow had embittered the outlaw, and once more he took the lawless trails, striving to forget his great loss among the hum of lead and the excitement of outlawry.

Only now did Harding realise his selfishness. Only now when relentless lawofficers were closing in on him did he realise the grave wrong he had been doing his five-year-old son.

With the Star City posse hard on his heels the gunman had fled into the hills, determined to make one last desperate effort to place his son where the stigma of his father's name could not reach him. In the nick of time he had reached Sonny, and fled with him towards the borders of the next state. Over the pass ahead of him he knew that when he could leave his son; knew that Sonny would be looked after and kept in ignorance of the true character of the father he loved.

Hot-foot they had fled, father and son. And now—

Guarding the pass to the safety of the next State was another posse. Behind now, the news had travelled ahead of the fleeing outlaw, and men were gathered in the narrow pass to prevent his escape, with showers of flaming lead.

Glyn Harding dismounted and lifted his son from the saddle. Sonny was tired and hungry, and glad of the halt. The outlaw muttered a silent prayer of thankfulness that the little chap knew nothing of what was to come.

"I'll get through—somehow!" muttered the outlaw desperately. "I'll get him away—I must!"

He looked round hastily for some kind of cover, some place he could use to make his last stand.

It would be dark soon, and that was something in the outlaw's favour; it would at least delay the chances of the two posses of finding him until the dawn came again.

His eye fell upon the huge boulders lying side by side in the bottom of the valley. Between them was a narrow space where Sonny could be hidden so that the child might evade the bullets that were bound to fly.

There was no cover for his horse, and reluctant though he was to lose him, Harding unsaddled him and set him free, driving him from the hiding-place with a couple of flicks of his broad-brimmed hat.

The thud of hoofs came echoing through the valley now. The Star City posse were close at hand.

For a moment Glyn Harding hoped that they might pass him by, might over-ride his hiding-place, and thus give him a chance to slip back on the trail he had taken.

But that hope remained for a moment only. A sudden shout warned him that his horse had been seen, and he knew that the posse would now disperse in all directions to search every inch of the valley until they found him.

The shadows lengthened, and dusk came quickly. Already the outlaw saw the Star City posse, in open formation, sweeping up the valley towards him.

His hands gripped the butts of his guns tightly. His face was white and set. The moment they saw him he would be ready for action—and the guns that he hated now would blaze their defiance.

One of the advancing law-officers saw the outlaw a little before Harding expected to be discovered.

The man uttered a shout and let loose a stream of lead towards the sheltering boulders.

Harding did not reply at once. Then he saw the posse slowly closing in on him, and at last his guns began their deadly work.

Twelve shots he fired—with such deadly accuracy and speed that the advancing men were forced to waver and seek cover. That respite gave Glyn Harding time to reload, and another dozen bullets went swinging on their way.

Meanwhile, a hail of lead pattered around the boulders, and Sonny sat in the narrow little crevice chattering to his daddy, innocent of the flying death that was all around him.

The shooting suddenly ceased from out in front, and Glyn Harding once more seized his guns and waited.

Somewhere out in the valley he could hear a man shouting; an injured posse-man, no doubt calling for help.

The outlaw knew that that cry for help would not go long unheeded, and suddenly a desperate plan came into his head—a plan which offered the barest chance to escape from his awful trap.

"Stay here and keep very quiet, Sonny," muttered the outlaw to his son. "I'll not be long. Be good, won't you?"

Sleepily, the child answered, and with head pillowed on his arm, sank into sleep in the very midst of death.

Harding left his hiding-place cautiously. Slowly he wormed his way towards the spot where the cries for help were rising on the night air.

As he drew near a fallen figure he heard light footsteps away to his right. Someone was coming to the aid of the injured man; it was that someone whom Glyn Harding meant to meet.

Like a ghost the outlaw rose suddenly in the path of the oncoming man, confronting him with a six-gun before the newcomer, eager to get to the side of a fallen companion, quite realised what had happened.

"One word and you're a dead man!" muttered Harding. "Back away quickly! Not a sound! Don't worry about that wounded man—someone else will attend to him. Move, man, move!"

The glint of a star on his prisoner's chest gave Glyn Harding keen satisfaction. He knew that he had captured a sheriff or a deputy at least, and his plan called for such a man in authority.

Slowly the outlaw pressed his prisoner back towards the two big boulders where Sonny slept.

"Pick up the boy!" he snapped. "And, remember, that you're Glyn Harding until I'm out of sight. One false move, one little peep out of you, and I'll drop you sure as you're born!"

Like a ghost the outlaw rose suddenly in the path of the oncoming man, confronting him with a six-gun before the newcomer quite realised what had happened. "One word and you're a dead man!" Harding muttered fiercely.

Flight!

GLYN HARDING whipped away his prisoner's gun-belt and let it fall to the ground. Then he took the star from the man's breast and pinned it on his own.

"Now get going!" he muttered. "Towards the pass! Carry that kid carefully, and remember, my gun will be an inch from your backbone every step of the way. Forward!"

The captured man was wise enough to know that his life depended on obeying. With Sonny half-asleep in his arms, he began to walk towards the pass and the ambushing posse that waited there.

Behind him in the valley Glyn Harding heard movements, cries, and groans. He knew that, for the time being, the Star City posse would be busy attending to their fallen comrades.

As they neared the pass, the outlaw's spirits began to rise.

So far, his scheme was working well. If only the luck held good now, he might win through.

"Halt, and grab the air!"

The sudden command came hurtling out of the night.

Glyn Harding obeyed instantly, muttering a word of warning to the man who carried his son.

"Who are you? Come closer, and let's have a look at you!"

"All right, pard!" answered Glyn Harding easily. "I'm a deputy sheriff from Star City. I'm bringing in Glyn Harding, the wanted man. You needn't be afraid of Harding now. I've got the drop on him good and proper!"

Two men advanced down the trail, guns held ready before them.

They saw the deputy, with the child in his arm; saw the outlaw, with the sheriff's star on his chest—and fell for the deception which Glyn Harding had planned.

"So you got Harding, eh, pard?" said one of the men. "Got him with that kid of his, too! Well, I aim to say you smart Alecks made a right smart capture! By all accounts, Harding's some prize gunman. Step this way with your prisoner, pard. The sheriff's up yonder a mite, and will be pleased to see you and him!"

Still keeping close behind his prisoner and Sonny Glyn, Harding obeyed instructions and went forward.

He knew that he was treading on the most dangerous ground of all now. He know that there were certain to be men among this hidden posse who would recognise him and see through his strategy. What he wanted now was to cast eyes on a saddled horse—then would he make his great dash for liberty.

One of the men called out, and was answered by another in a cave just ahead.

"Bring the sheriff, Jake," said the man at Harding's elbow. "We've got Harding here. The chase is over!"

There was movement in the cave, and Glyn Harding cast his eyes around quickly. Yes, there were horses near at hand—some tethered and off-saddled, but two ready for the trail—and obviously fresh, too.

"Put the kid down, Harding!" snapped Glyn, still keeping up the deception. "That's right. Just keep an eye on him, fellows, will you? I'll go and report to your sheriff."

The prisoner put Sonny down. Immediately, the two men closed up to take charge of he whom they thought was a desperate outlaw.

Harding took his chance. In a bound he was at Sonny's side—had caught him up in his strong arms, and was dashing for the saddled horses standing on the trail.

At incredible speed he mounted, spurred one of the animals, and was away at a gallop.

Immediately uproar broke out behind him. The man he had captured was yelling the truth at the top of his voice. Men raced for horses; some sent hot lead after the fugitive as, crouched low so that his body shielded Sonny from the flying bullets, Glyn Harding made his break for liberty.

"We'll get through, son!" muttered the outlaw, as he urged the splendid horse under him to its utmost. "We'll get through now. The luck's come our way at last!"

But for three sleepless days the outlaw could not lose the relentless posse that dogged him.

For three days he fought the officers of the law with every ounce of his strength and courage. Running now in full flight; now stopping to make a desperate stand. Doubling back at times to capture the fallen pony of a following posse-man. Resting in brief snatches in some tiny gully, watching over Sonny as the wondering child slept, gun ready cocked for action at the slightest need.

Then that desperate stand at the ford, where his horse was shot from under him and he was forced to flee on foot; limping along with a wounded leg, crawling along the ridge-tops, fighting—ever fighting to the very last gasp for the young life that meant so much to him.

The third day dawned at last, and Glyn Harding knew that he had won. He never could have got through but for his determination to atone to Sonny for the blind selfishness of his outlaw life. He had left many dead behind him, and he knew that he had ridden out of the tightest, fiercest gun-duel of his career.

His head was bound with his torn neckerchief; his wounded leg felt heavy as lead; he could barely use his left arm. But Sonny was safe.

At a tiny farm-house in a peaceful valley many, many miles from the scene of his father's activities Glyn Harding left his son.

John Russell and his wife had been friends of Mary Wilson before Mary had met and married Glyn Harding. Harding knew that his son, whom they had never seen—whom they had never even heard of—would be safe in their keeping.

"I'm asking you to take Mary's son, John," the outlaw said, when his long and weary ride was over. "You knew, and loved, Mary. I—I adored her. Sonny was hers as well as mine, and I know that, for her sake, you'll look after him. Never tell a soul who he really is. There are men who would break you in little pieces if they knew; they hate me so. When I come back, I'll—I'll make it up to you. If I don't ever come back, you'll know they've got me, and that—that Mary's son is alone in the world!"

"Daddy!" cried Sonny suddenly. "Daddy! Please don't go! Don't leave me—don't leave me!"

The outlaw held his son even tighter for a moment; but he was forced to put him from him at last.

"It's for the best, Sonny!" he muttered. "It's all for your own sake!"

John Russell said never a word, but he gripped the outlaw's hand in such a fashion that Glyn Harding knew that his trust would never be misplaced.

But before he climbed on to the back of his waiting pony, the gunman lifted his son into his arms and held him tightly.

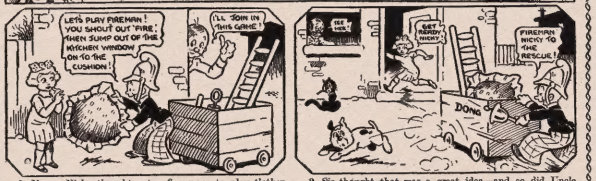
He tried to speak, but a strange hard lump filled his throat. Sonny clung to him tightly, whimpering a little. The outlaw's eyes filled with dim mist, and slowly he turned and stared towards the distant hills, where he had left so much grave.

Then, with something like a sob, he set the little chap down, leaped into the saddle, and, without so much as one backward glance, rode away to the south; whilst Sonny cried himself to sleep in the motherly arms of Mrs. Russell.

(Another long and thrilling instalment of this fine Western story in next Saturday's JESTER.)

9-11-29

UNCLE SQUIBS AND HIS NAUGHTY NIBS

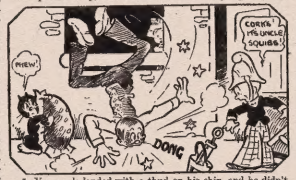


1. Young Nicky thought out a fine game to play t'other early-closing day. "Let's play fires, Sis!" he cried. "When I shout 'Fire!' you jump out of the window on to the cushion."

2. Sis thought that was a great idea—and so did Uncle Squibs, who was doing a drop of listening. "H'm!" said nunk. "I'll join in this!" Then Nicky started off with a rush.

3. Nicky did the fireman's part fine! Up he came and threw down the cushion—not noticing the cat, though! Meanwhile, uncle pushed Sissy aside and told her he was going to jump.

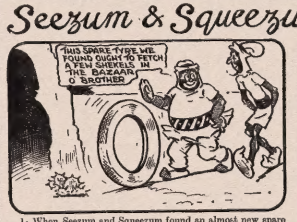
4. On to the window uncle got and heroically dived head-first to the ground, thinking he was going to land on the cushion! But the cat walked off and altered the outlook a bit!



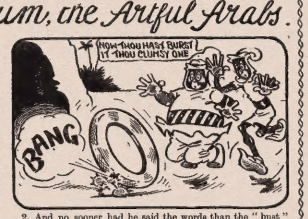
5. Yes, uncle landed with a thud on his chin, and he didn't seem to think that the game was as good as it looked. "Coo, it's uncle!" said Nicky. "What's he gone to sleep for?"

6. There was no doubt about it that uncle was asleep, and as it happened that a fire engine popped along on its way to a real fire, those Nibs followed it with no one to say "Nay."

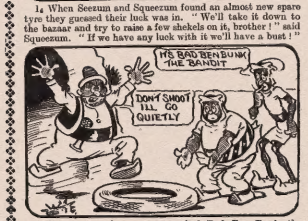
Seezum & Squeezum, the Artful Arabs.



1. When Seezum and Squeezum found an almost new spare tyre they guessed their luck was in. "We'll take it down to the bazaar and try to raise a few shekels on it, brother!" said Squeezum. "If we have any luck with it we'll have a bust!"



2. And no sooner had he said the words than the "bust" came! Over a bit of cactus went the tyre, and the next tick there was a loud report that frightened those artful ones out of their skins! But that wasn't all of it. No! Nunno!



3. From a near-by cave out rushed Bad Ben Bunk, the bandit, hands in air. "Don't shoot, comrades!" cried the bad lad. "I'll go quietly! I know you've got a gun—I heard the bang!" Those Arabs did a drop of quick thinking then!

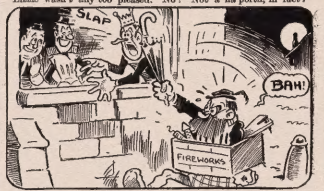
4. But they soon had Bad Ben a prisoner, and away they took him to the bad laddery, where the local cop was only too glad to hand over the reward. "That bust was lucky for us!" said Seezum. "Now we'll have another kind of bust up!"

LIZZIE COMICAL AND HER COURTIERS

LIZZIE GOES OFF AT THE KNIGHTS ON FIREWORK DAY!

1. When Sir Walter Rally and Sir Francis Hake toddled into the throne-room and showed the queen a box of fireworks, Lizzie wasn't any too pleased. No! Not a ha'porth, in fact!

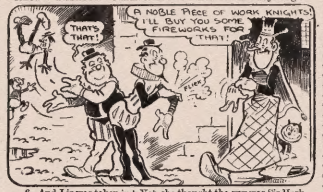
2. You see, the dear old lass remembered last year's little drop of excitement, and she wasn't having anyone getting hurt this year. So she grabbed the fireworks and heaved them away!



3. But it so happened that that box of crackers cracked Sir Herbert Hardcheese on the bean, and promptly that bold knight biffed her royalty ness a hearty one behind the ear with his brolly.

4. Naturally, Lizzie ordered her knights to sally forth and give battle. "H'm!" muttered Sir Walter. "You knave is a hefty fellow! Strikes me we shall come off worse if we start anything!"

5. But Sir Francis had spotted some passing youngsters with a guy, and the sight of same gave that noble knight a bright idea. There and then he and Sir Wally started biffing the dummy!



6. And Liz was taken in! Yes, she thought the guy was Sir Herb, and she was so pleased when she saw Francis throw him away that she came all over generous and promised to buy some squibs.

7. While she was still in the mood those knights piloted her round to the nearest cracker shop and waited happily whilst the old lass purchased sixpennyworth of mixed. Then the fun started!

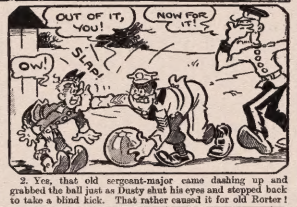
8. Yes, Lizzie selected a couple of golden rains and stepped back to show the knights her choice. Accidentally she jabbed Wally one in the waistcoat, and that famous laddie lost his cigar.

9. Then the fat was in the fire and the lighted cigar was in the fireworks! There was one mighty boom, and Lizzie and her trusty lads went on a record aerial trip at a terrific speed!

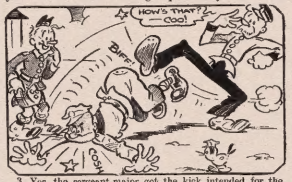
10. And when the shades of night were lit up by the fireworks of the populace, Lizzie and her courtiers were seen once more. Yes, hanging on the near-by steeple—they did look a mess! 9-11-29

SANDY AND DUSTY THE REGIMENTAL RASCALS

1. Sandy and Dusty were relieving the boredom of sentry duty with a perfectly innocent game of football, and—would you believe it?—old Rorter got quite annoyed about it!

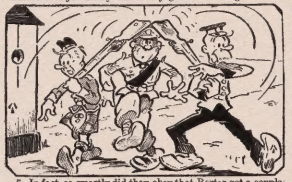


2. Yes, that old sergeant-major came dashing up and grabbed the ball just as Dusty shut his eyes and stepped back to take a blind kick. That rather caused it for old Rorter!

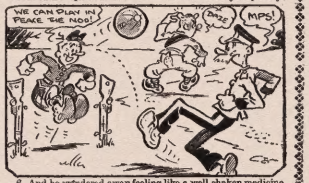


3. Yes, the sergeant-major got the kick intended for the ball, and that caused him to park his moustache on the ground rather forcibly. Sandy and Dusty grabbed their guns then.

4. "Bah!" yelled Rorter, picking himself up and sorting himself. "Slope arms and slope off! Get a move on! Jump to it! About turn! Quick march!" And the rascals obeyed quickly.



5. In fact, so smartly did they obey that Rorter got a couple of cloaks on the dome that made him go all sideways. Bells seemed to be ringing all around him. Quite knocked up he was!



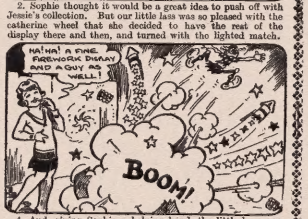
6. And he wandered away feeling like a well-shaken medicine bottle and looking three ways at once. Sandy and Dusty didn't bother about him any more, but just got on with their game!

Jessie Joy, Just Like a Boy.

1. Jessie Joy had been saving hard to buy some fireworks, and she certainly had a lovely lot on the Fifth. On the way home the little lass decided to light just one catherine wheel—and then that slinky Sophie Slink arrived on the scene!

2. Sophie thought it would be a great idea to push off with Jessie's collection. But our little lass was so pleased with the catherine wheel that she decided to have the rest of the display there and then, and turned with the lighted match.

3. Sophie, being in the way, got a trifle hot and bothered. Yes, the lighted match set her skirt alight, and she was soon hopping round unhappily. But Jessie came to her aid. "Sit down quickly and smother the flames!" said she promptly.



4. And, giving Sophie a helping hand, the little lass soon had her seated—right in the firework box! That rather did it! Yes, the display was a wonderful success, and Jessie thoroughly enjoyed it. Not so Sophie, though. She was properly fed up!

JERRY JONES AND UNCLE BONES

Don't miss this complete story if you enjoy a hearty laugh.

IT was Saturday afternoon, and Jerry Jones, the happy-go-lucky lad, was sitting in the little front room of his lodgings, playing a game of draughts with his landlady's pretty daughter, Ethel Bright, when a sudden shout outside brought him quickly to his feet.

"Hallo! Did you hear that, Ethel?" he exclaimed, running to the window that looked out on to the street. "There's somebody coming along with a guy. It will be Guy Fawkes Day on Tuesday, and I had almost forgotten it. Look, here it is!"

Ethel hurried to the window and peered out, just as a cheery-faced youngster pulled up outside with a dummy figure perched in a little push-cart.

"Why, it's young Tommy Wilkins!" exclaimed the girl, pulling the curtains on one side to obtain a better view. "And isn't it a lovely guy? It must have taken him hours to make that. Shall we go out and have a good look at it?"

Before Jerry could reply, a grey-haired old man with stooping shoulders and a lined, wizened face, came along the street, and the chums saw Tommy Wilkins doff his cap with a smile and hold it out to the old man.

"Please remember the guy, sir, only once a year!" remarked Tommy, glibly, and the old man pulled up with a start, glaring at the boy over the top of his steel-rimmed spectacles.

"Remember the what?" he snapped.

"The guy, sir!" smiled Tommy, indicating the dummy figure in the cart with a wave of his hand. "It only comes once a year, sir!"

The old man screwed his lined face to a puzzled frown.

"Only comes once a year?" he echoed. "What are you talking about?"

"Guy Fawkes Day, sir!" volunteered Tommy, still smiling cheerily. "You've heard of old Guy Fawkes, of course, sir. He tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament some years ago."

"Bah! I know all about that!" snorted the old man, waving his walking-stick angrily at the boy. "He is responsible for you kids parading the streets every year with those absurd figures and begging for money. Bah! You ought to be ashamed of yourself! Remember your guy, eh? Yes, I'll remember it—and you'll remember me, too, when I've finished with it! I'll teach you to come begging to me for money, you good-for-nothing young rascal!"

And as he spluttered out the words the old man raised his walking-stick, and with one swinging blow knocked the dummy's head from its shoulders! But even this did not satisfy him, and he continued to belabour the unfortunate guy until he had reduced it to a mass of rags and sawdust.

As Jerry and Ethel saw the old man make this sudden attack on the guy, they were too surprised to move or even shout, and when at last they decided to take some action, and hurried out of the house, they found the old man had disappeared down a side street, and Tommy Wilkins was sobbing bitterly beside the shattered remains of his guy.

"Now, don't take it too much to heart, Tommy," said Jerry, patting the boy on the shoulder. "I'll help you to remake your guy."

"It's a pity you asked that old man to remember your guy," put in Ethel. "He's never been known to give a penny-piece to charity or any deserving cause, and he's worth quite a lot of money, too, so I hear."

"Well, who is he?" inquired Jerry, glancing quickly at his chum. "I've never seen the old fossil before, but I'd certainly like to know him, in case I meet him again!"

"His name is Silas Weasel," said Ethel, "and he has lived for some years in that tumbledown house on the corner of Wilmot Street. "Why, I've heard people say that he is as mean that he always walks with a very long stride to save wearing his boots out!"

"Oh, I say!" grinned Jerry. "That yarn wants a bit of swallowing, Ethel!"

"I agree that it does," rejoined the girl; but it will just give you an idea what the people in this district think of him. Why, there is not a person knows him who would ever think of asking him for anything. He always flies into a temper like that."

"Well, he deserves to be ducked in a horse-trough," said Jerry. "And I'd be the first to lend a hand to do it, too!"

"So would I!" broke in Tommy Wilkins, as he surveyed the remains of his guy. "It took me nearly a week to make that, Jerry," he went on, his lips trembling with emotion, "and now look at it! I shall never be able to fix it up again in time for the bonfire on Tuesday night!"

Jerry smiled, and placed his arm affectionately round the boy's shoulders. "Now, don't let that worry you, Tommy," he said. "I'll soon fix up your guy for you. There's plenty of sawdust and shavings round at the builder's yard where I work, and with the three of us on the job we should get your guy finished in no time. Are you game to come along to the yard, Ethel?" he added, turning to the chum.

"Rather!" exclaimed the girl. "But you'd better wait a second while I go and fetch a needle and cotton. It looks to me as though there is a lot of sewing to be done," she added, indicating the torn garments of the guy with a quick jerk of her pretty head. "Wait for me. I shan't be a minute!"

"And wait for me; I shan't be half an hour!" came a muffled voice from the inside coat pocket. And the next moment Uncle Bones came fluttering out, and started hopping all round the guy. "Oh, I say! What a fight I've missed!" croaked the wily old bird. "Who done it?"

"Now, now, steady on!" smiled Jerry, shaking a reproving forefinger at his pet. "You mustn't say 'Who done it.' "

"Why not?" squawked the parrot.

"Because it's very bad grammar, uncle," said Jerry.

"Very bad gram'ma?" echoed the wily old bird. "Who's a very bad gram'ma? I'm an uncle, I am! Come and kiss your old uncle!" And to Tommy Wilkins' surprise and delight, the parrot flew up and perched itself on his shoulder.

For a few moments the boy could do nothing but stare with wide-open eyes at Jerry's pet; and when, to his amazement, Uncle Bones suddenly squawked:

"Oh, gran'ma, what big eyes you've got!"

This remark almost made Tommy double up with laughter.

"Oh dear!" he exclaimed. "What a funny bird! Where did he learn to say all these funny things?"

"Oh, I go to night-school in the day-time —I don't think!" grinned the parrot.

"I'm afraid you won't get much sense out of uncle if you ask him any questions, Tommy," laughed Jerry. "He just says the first thing that comes into his head. Hallo! Here's Ethel with the needle and cotton," he added, as the girl came running out of the house. "Now I vote we all go along to the builder's yard at once, and see if we can patch up your guy. I've got a good guy-face in the house, Tommy, and almost the image of Mr. Weasel, and I vote that we make a guy to look like him. It will be great fun to put him on the bonfire on Guy Fawkes Night! What do you think?"

"Rather!" chorused Ethel and Tommy.

The builder's yard was only a few minutes' walk from the house, and the chums were soon busy in the workshop remaking Tommy's guy. For over two hours they were without a break, and when at last Jerry fixed the guy-face on the dummy figure they were all amazed to see what a speaking likeness it was to the old miser, Silas Weasel.

"Coo, that's fine!" cried Tommy. "I bet if Mr. Weasel saw that he'd tear his hair out with rage!"

"I expect he would if he had any hair, Tommy," grinned Jerry. "But I think the old miser is bald-headed. Now, all we want to make the guy complete is a pair of boots "is to find an old chair. He'd look more natural if he is sitting in a chair. I'll borrow an old one from the office, but we must be careful that we don't break it. Wait here. I shan't be a minute."

As Jerry hurried out of the workshop, Uncle Bones, who had been sleeping peacefully perched up on a gas-bracket, suddenly awakened and started hopping all round the guy.

"Hallo, hallo! Look what the wind has blown up, boys!" he shouted. "What a funny-looking bloke! My word, he does look well! Has he been ill?"

"That's not a man, uncle, it's a guy," remarked Ethel, with a smile.

"A pie?" echoed the wily old bird. "I could do with a bit of pie. Not half! Cut me off a couple of slices!"

Both Tommy and Ethel laughed until the tears rolled down their cheeks.

"It isn't a pie, you silly old silly!" said Ethel at length. "I said it was guy. You know what a guy is, don't you?"

"No; do you?" squawked the parrot.

"Of course I do," replied the girl.

"Then what are you asking me for?" shouted Uncle Bones.

Just at this moment Jerry returned with the chair, and with the assistance of Ethel and Tommy he lifted the dummy figure of Mr. Weasel into it. Then out of the builder's yard they went, carrying the guy between them.

As they passed through the gates they almost bumped into a policeman who was standing outside.

"I say, that's a fine guy you've got there, sonny!" said the policeman, staring down at the dummy. "Did you make it yourself?"

"Well, all three of us had a hand in it, sir," replied Jerry, flushing with pride.

"Well, he certainly has made a fine job of it!" smiled the constable, as he stooped down to take a closer look at the guy. "And, my word, he suddenly exclaimed, "it looks the image of that old miser, Mr. Weasel! Ha, ha! I must tell my inspector about this! Did you make this guy purposely like Mr. Weasel, sonny, or is it just an accident?"

"No; we did try to make it like him, sir," replied Jerry, "and I'm glad you think we have succeeded."

"I should just think you have!" laughed the policeman. "But what made you make a guy of Mr. Weasel?"

Jerry told him, and as the constable listened to the story his face narrowed and his lips tightened to a straight line.

"Yes, I know the old miser well," he nodded, "and I only wish I had caught him smashing the guy myself. I'd have made him pay dearly for the damage. Well, good luck to you youngsters," he added, as he began to move off. "I hope you get a good collection with your guy—it deserves it—and here's something to start off with." And to Jerry's surprise he pressed a six-penny-piece into the guy's lap.

"Well, that's a bit of luck for you, Tommy," remarked Jerry, as they set off down the road. "If you have to bump into a few more people like the policeman you will have a good bonfire night."

As they proceeded along the road several people stopped to look at the guy, and within a quarter of an hour Tommy had collected another shilling.

Everything was going swimmingly, when Ethel suddenly observed Mr. Weasel strolling towards them, and with a low cry she warned Jerry of the miser's presence.

"My hat!" gasped Jerry. "We must hide this guy somewhere. If Mr. Weasel sees it he'll smash it to bits. Now, what can we do with it?"

"Let's hide it in that garden," suggested Ethel, nodding towards a front garden of a house close by, which was fringed with a high privet hedge. "He'll never see us behind there."

"That's a good idea," nodded Jerry. "Now give me a hand with the guy, before the old miser spots us."

In their eagerness to conceal themselves and the guy, the chums lifted the dummy figure out of the chair and carried it into the garden, leaving the chair standing on the pavement outside. They wasn't until they were safely hidden behind the hedge that Jerry realised what they had done.

"Oh, my hat, Tommy aunt!" he exclaimed. "We've left the chair out there, and it's too late for me to go and fetch it now."

"Well, don't worry. Let's wait until Mr. Weasel has gone past," said Ethel.

By this time the old miser was rapidly approaching the spot where the chums and Tommy Wilkins were hiding, and they could hear his slithering footsteps getting louder and louder.

Suddenly they stopped altogether, and, peering through the hedge, Jerry gave vent to a little gasp of surprise as he saw the old miser staring down at the chair.

"Eh? What? Who left this here?" murmured Mr. Weasel, squinting at the chair over the top of his spectacles. "It looks a good chair, too," he went on, walking slowly round it. "I wonder if it is comfortable to sit in? I feel a bit weary. I've had a long walk this afternoon."

And to Jerry's dismay the old miser dropped into the chair and sat back with his arms folded across his chest.

For some seconds the chums stared at the old man in silence, and then Ethel turned suddenly to Jerry.

"Well, would you believe it!" she whispered. "What are we going to do about it?"

Jerry shrugged his shoulders.

"Goodness knows—I don't!" he whispered back. "I shouldn't be a bit surprised if the old rascal doesn't fall asleep, then the fat will be in the fire."

As if in answer to Jerry's remark, a deep snore came from Mr. Weasel, and the chums realised with a start that the old miser had fallen asleep.

"Well, I don't know what we are going to do now!" groaned Jerry. "We can't stop here all the afternoon while that old fossil enjoys a little snooze. I'll have to hide behind the car with a twig or something."

Just at this moment heavy footsteps sounded in the street, and the chums peered through the hedge again to see the policeman whom they had met earlier in the afternoon walking swiftly towards them.

Before Jerry could decide what to do, the policeman reached the sleeping figure of the old miser and pulled up sharply.

"Well, I never!" he muttered, taking a swift look at Mr. Weasel. "Fancy those youngsters leaving their guy unattended in the street like this! It's a very risky thing to do, but I suppose they live in this house." He stepped back a pace to survey the sleeping figure, and as Mr. Weasel's head had drooped forward on his chest, the policeman was unable to get a clear view of the old miser's face. "It's a wonderful guy," he murmured, with a broad smile. "It's the dead spit of old Weasel, and, what's more, I'd like to pull the old fossil's nose just like this!"

And to the chums' surprise and delight they saw the policeman grip Mr. Weasel's nose and give it a sharp twist.

The next moment the old miser leaped from the chair with a wild shriek that brought a couple of women running into the street from neighbouring houses.

"You brute!" shouted Mr. Weasel, facing the astonished policeman. "How dare you assault me like that, eh? I shall complain to your inspector. What do you mean by it, sir?"

"Well, I mistook you for a guy, that's all," grinned the policeman now that he had recovered from the shock.

"And that's just what he is!" shouted a man in the crowd. "He's no good to anybody, the mean old skinflint!"

"Hear, hear!" chorused a number of voices. "Let's fling the old miser in the duckpond! A cold bath will do him the world of good!"

Mr. Weasel's face went ghastly white and, with shaking hands, he gripped the policeman by the arm.

"Oh, save me, save me!" he shrieked. "I demand your protection, officer!"

"All right. Now, don't alarm yourself," grinned the policeman. "I'll see that you don't come to any harm, but I'm not going to say that you don't deserve to be ducked in the duckpond. I heard this afternoon that you smashed up a little boy's guy. Now, what do you want to do about it?"

"I'll pay for it—I'll pay for it, if you only tell me what I owe him," mumbled the old miser.

"Then here's the boy, Mr. Weasel!" exclaimed Jerry, suddenly emerging from the front garden and pushing Tommy Wilkins in front of him. "And I want to make any charge for you sleeping in my chair."

With the crowd surrounding him on all sides the old miser was quite frightened to refuse, and it wasn't until he had handed Tommy Wilkins a well-thumbed ten-shilling note that he was allowed to be escorted away by the smiling constable.

It was then that Jerry produced his dummy of Mr. Weasel, and the crowd roared with laughter as they gathered round it, throwing coppers into Tommy's hat.

But this is not the end of the story. That same evening, Mr. Weasel called round at Ethel's house and, to the chums' surprise, he asked to see the dummy of himself. And after gazing at it for some minutes he turned to the chums, and they were amazed to see tears in his eyes.

"I did not realise what fun information what a hard man I have been," he said softly, "and—and I would like to be present on Guy Fawkes Night when you burn your bonfire. I want to see this effigy of myself burned to ashes. That will be the end of Silas Weasel the miser."

From that day Mr. Weasel was a changed man, and his munificent gifts to the poor in the district have earned for him the utmost respect of all who know him, and no longer is he called an old miser and a skinflint.

(There will be another complete adventure of Jerry Jones, Uncle Bones, and Ethel Bright in next Saturday's JESTER. Order your copy to-day.)

9-11-29

The Discovery.

"THE art of keeping cool in all circumstances is one which I like to see folk cultivating," said old Tom Martin, the night-watchman. "You never know when the habit may come in useful. Take the case of young Terry Finnigan, for instance. Terry was an Irish youth, too—and yet he had so learned to keep cool in all sorts of situations that when—— But I'd better begin at the beginning, I think!"

Tom's youthful audience gathered around him for the tale, and at once the old night-watchman began:

When Terry Finnigan was appointed second-footman in the household of Lord Whyatt, he felt that he had made a definite step forward in his life.

He was only eighteen, and a few months previously he had been odd man at the Hall. Before that he had been his lordship's under-gardener. But he showed such zeal and willingness in his work that promotion became rapid.

To-night he felt that great responsibilities had been thrust upon him.

The family had gone to a show in town, and it would be well after midnight before the car could bring them the thirty odd miles from the theatre to the modern house in the county in which the family lived during the London season.

It was eleven now, and Johnson, the aged butler, had announced his intention of going to bed.

"You can stay up, Terry," said the old servant, "and wait for them all to come in. They shouldn't be long after midnight. Just see if they want anything, and be sure and look up when they've all gone to bed. If you want something to do to pass the next hour away, you can take old Rover for a run down the lane. Take the key with you and let yourself in when you get back. Good-night!"

Terry found old Rover, the collie, quite willing to be a moonlight ramble, and, accompanied by the dog, the young footman left the house, strode rapidly down the gravel drive, and turned into the broad main road that passed the house.

Usually at this hour the road was busy with motor traffic; but thanks to the fact that a distant local council had at last decided to repair the highway, a broad avenue of red lights was all that greeted Terry's eye when he left the lodge gates for the walk.

He lit a cigarette and strode along to the watchman's hut a few hundred yards along the road.

For perhaps a quarter of an hour he remained in conversation with the genial night-watchman, and then retraced his steps.

Rover ran on in front, pushing his way through the hedge of the gate as he reached the Hall, too much in a hurry to wait for Terry to open it.

Then suddenly the dog gave tongue, and Terry saw him snarling and snuffling round something still and bulky that lay full in the centre of the gravel drive.

In a few strides the young footman had reached the huddled heap, and as he gazed down, he found himself looking at the figure of a well-dressed man.

The man's light raincoat was badly torn. It was muddy, and his face was white and flecked with blood. His right hand was bleeding from a nasty cut. But he stirred slightly and showed signs of returning to consciousness.

Terry bent down and picked the stranger up and set him unsteadily on his feet.

"Shute, you're in a bad shape, sorr!" he said sympathetically. "How did ye come to be here loike this?"

"I'm—— I—— Oh, thank you!" muttered the stranger, a little dazedly. "I was knocked down by a car on the main road, I think. I received a nasty knock, and was staggering along to the nearest house to get help when I—I suppose I must have collapsed."

"A car, eh?" queried Terry, his eyes narrowing suddenly. "These motorists! Give me your arm, sorr! I'll help you up to the house, where you can rest awhile. Maybe I can telephone for the doctor. This way, sorr!"

He placed a firm arm around the stranger's waist, and the injured man had no option but to walk with him towards the house.

Terry quickly opened the front door and switched on a light in a waiting-room to the right of the lounge hall. Carefully he piloted the man to a chair and sat him down.

"I'll telephone to Dr. Morgan at once, sorr!" he said. "He doesn't live too far away, and——"

"Oh, please don't trouble!" said the stranger. "I shall be all right after a rest, and it's a shame to bring the doctor out here at this hour of night. I do trust you will not get into trouble for bringing me in here, my man. I'm a perfect stranger, you know, and——"

"My master is Lord Whyatt," said the young footman quietly. "His lordship would certainly be annoyed if he knew Oi had refused to help an injured man outside his home. Maybe a drop of brandy would help you round, sorr?"

"Oh—er—thanks!" said the stranger. "I shall take the first opportunity of thanking his lordship for the hospitable way you are treating me, my man. If you could find a bandage for this hand of mine, I think I won't have to trouble you any longer!"

"Oi'm afraid the housekeeper has gone to bed, sorr," said Terry. "She's the only one I could get a bandage from. But Oi've a big handkerchief here, sorr. Maybe that will do the trick."

"Excellently!" said the stranger. "And now just a nip of brandy, and I'll be on my way. How far is it to the station?"

Terry was busy at the sideboard pouring out a stiff dose of the spirit. As he spoke, the stranger did a mysterious thing whilst the young footman's back was turned towards him. He leaned across the table towards a bowl of fruit, picked up a big ripe William pear, handled it for a moment as if admiring its size and then replaced it as Terry turned round with the brandy.

"The station, sorr?" echoed the young footman. "All of a mile, sorr! You've a bit shaky to walk to the station. If you don't mind waiting a quarter of an hour or so, the family will be home, and Oi'm certain his lordship will insist on Oi'm driving you to the station in the car, sorr!"

"Oh, I won't impose upon his lordship's hospitality like that!" said the stranger. "I shall be all right after the brandy."

"Or Oi could phone to Watson in the village, *sorr*," persisted Terry. "He's got an ould taxicab that's ready for use day or night! He'd be only too glad to drive ye to the station, sorr!"

"Ah!" said the stranger. "That's an idea! If I could trouble you to do that for me!"

"No trouble, sorr," said Terry. "The phone's right here, at me elbow, so to speak. Oi'll get the taxi along for ye in no time."

Terry lifted the receiver and gave a number. In a few moments he was put through.

"That you, Watson?" he asked. "The Hall speaking. Will ye kindly send Buckridge up here with the taxi at once? There's a gintleman here that want's driving to the station. Right! Good-bye!"

The Taxi Arrives.

TERRY glanced at the clock as he turned once more to the stranger, who was meekly sipping the glass of brandy that had been given him and deriving obvious benefit from the potent spirit.

For a moment the young footman looked at the stranger with a queer expression on his face. It was gone in a moment, and he was his usual cool and smiling self.

Ten minutes later the barking of the dogs at the back of the house and the noisy firing of an old motor-car engine announced the fact that the taxi had arrived.

The stranger rose.

"I wonder if I might trespass a little further on your hospitality, my man?" he said, with a smile. "I've been admiring those pears in the dish there. Were they grown here? They look so good that I'd dearly like to try one."

"With pleasure, sorr," said Terry. "Wait and Oi'll get ye a knife and——"

"Don't bother," said the stranger, selecting one of the pears. "I'll eat it in the train, if I may. Ah! That sounds as if the taxi is at the front. Thank you so much for your kindness. I will hasten to write to his lordship the moment I get back to town."

Whilst the young footman's back was turned towards him, the stranger leaned across the table and picked up a big, ripe William pear.

"Don't mention it, sorr," said Terry. "This way if you please!"

He led the way to the door and down the steps to where the old taxicab was shaking and coughing like some old invalid. He opened the door and helped the stranger within. Then he stepped inside the taxi himself, grabbing the stranger around the waist as he did so.

"Get the handcuffs on him, Buckridge!" he cried. "The divil's armed and desperate! Ah! That's better! Bejabers! O'im glad you had sense enough to understand my message. Now, just a minute! He's got one of our prize William pears that I'm rather anxious to find, Buckridge!"

Surely never was a man more surprised than that injured stranger!

As he entered the cab he had been seized by Terry, whilst from the darkness there had arisen the uniformed figure of one of the local police.

"What is the meaning of this outrage?" he cried. "What on earth——"

"Kape cool, old friend!" said Terry, as he stepped out of the cab with the William pear held carefully in his hand. "Kape cool! It means that I wasn't so simple as I looked, see? It means that——"

The sound of a car coming cautiously round from the back of the house broke on to Terry's ears. A moment later the family Rolls-Royce purred to a standstill and his lordship, with his wife and two daughters came hurrying out.

The sight of the taxi, the policeman, and the bare-headed Terry holding a pear made Lord Whyatt gasp.

"Kindly explain all this, Finnigan!" he said. "What's happening?"

"O'ive a notion O've captured a burglar, sorr!" said Terry. "A pleasant-spoken gintleman whom Oi found lying dazed in the droive yonder!"

"Heavens!" gasped one of his lordship's daughters. "And I left my jewel-case on the dressing-table! I've been worrying about that all the evening! Oh, I do hope——"

"Run upstairs and see if everything is all right, my dear!" said his lordship. "Buckridge, please bring your prisoner inside. Grey, fetch the car there and take a look round the grounds. If you see anyone, raise an alarm at once! Now explain what you're getting at, Finnigan!"

Inside the waiting-room, with the scowling stranger handcuffed and in the charge of the constable, Terry explained.

"O'i found him lying in the droive, sorr," he said. "O'i didn't suspect him at all, at all—until he told me he'd been knocked down by a motor on the main road, sorr! As you know, there hasn't been a car along the main road for a furthright on account of the road being up, sorr! I knew something was wrong when he tried to take the lift. Then when I lifted him to his feet I felt a hard lump in his pocket and knew he carried a gun! I discovered, too, that he was covered in red dust, sorr! The Hall is a modern house —built mostly of red bricks! O'i was certain he'd met with an accident whilst trying to climb from one of our upper windows!"

"Bless my soul!" said his lordship. "You have the makings of a detective, Finnigan. Well, go on! What happened then?"

"Well, I took the gintleman in and tried to set him at his ease, as your lordship would have wished me to do had he been a genuine case, sorr," went on Terry. "Then while I went to the sideboard to get him a glass of brandy I watched him in the mirror, sorr! He leaned forward, and I saw him press something into a pear, sorr—this pear!"

Terry held up the William pear.

"I felt sure he was hiding something there," he went on. "And, sure enough, when the taxi came the spalpeen—begging your pardon, sorr—the gintleman asked if he could have the pear to eat on his homeward journey! I guessed then he was after getting back the something he had hidden, so—so Oi gave him the pear roight, sorr!"

With a knife Terry cut the pear open. Buried in the pulpy flesh of the fruit were two large diamond ear-rings!

"Good heavens!" said his lordship. "Julia's drop ear-rings! The man knew what was valuable, evidently!"

"Yis, sorr!" said Terry. "I thought that way myself when O'i watched him sipping your lordship's old brandy!"

"But I—I—well, I hardly know what to say!" said Lord Whyatt. "The man's obviously a thief—a dangerous one, too! Better take him away, Buckridge. Charge him with attempted robbery. I'll come down to the station in the morning. Good-night!"

The constable touched his helmet and led his cowering prisoner away. His lordship hurried upstairs and quieted the fears of his womenfolk, who had just discovered the loss of the ear-rings.

When he came down again Terry was calmly locking up the big house for the night, whistling softly to himself as if nothing had happened.

"What a treasure!" muttered Lord Whyatt. "And as calm as a summer's morning after capturing a desperate rogue! I wonder what his secret is?"

His lordship stood in the waiting-room and watched the young footman silently for a while.

Terry shot home the bolts of the big front door, and then, with a discreet knock, entered the waiting-room.

"Would your lordship be requiring anything else the night?" he asked, in his best second-footman manner.

"Er—no, no, Finnigan! No thanks!" said Lord Whyatt. "That will be all for to-night—but—how did you manage to catch an armed rogue so simply?"

"By kaping cool, sorr!" said Terry. "By kaping cool!"

"Needless to say, his lordship did not overlook the smart way Terry had safeguarded his home for him," concluded old Tom, with a smile. "Such a cool and resourceful youngster was wasted as a second-footman, and Terry is now in charge of a section of Lord Whyatt's business which calls for just the tact and courage and coolness that the young Irishman has trained himself to preserve. Good-night, all!"

(Another complete tale told by old Tom Martin, the night-watchman, next Saturday's JESTER.)

9-11-29

TWO TALES YOU MUST READ!

They are—

"THE RUSTLERS OF TUMBLING RIVER!"

An enthralling drama of the Wild West, featuring the popular Cowboy Charlie. A tale of lawless deeds on the lone trails of the bad lands, and—

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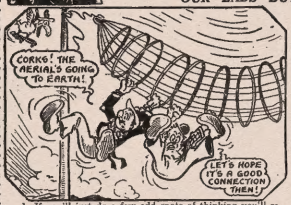
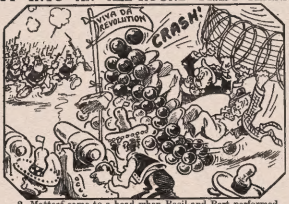
THE WORLD WIDE WANDERINGS OF BASIL & BERT

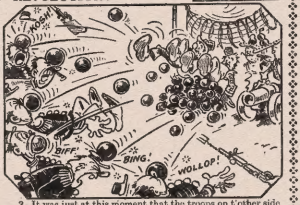
OUR LADS BUTT INTO AN ALL-ROUND FIRST-CLASS REVOLUTION!



1. If you'll just do a few odd spots of thinking you'll remember that last week Basil and Bert looked like coming to earth with a bit of a thud when the announcer at the Mexican Broadcasting Station cut loose the aerial on which the wanderers were endeavouring to get some sleep. When they discovered their position their spirits fell somewhat, too!

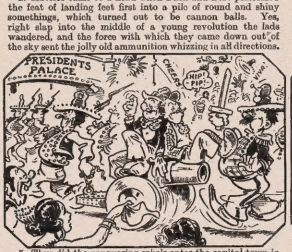


2. Matters came to a head when Basil and Bert performed the feat of landing feet first into a pile of round and shiny somethings, which turned out to be cannon balls. Yes, right slap into the middle of a young revolution the lads wandered, and the force with which they came down out of the sky sent the jolly old ammunition whizzing in all directions.

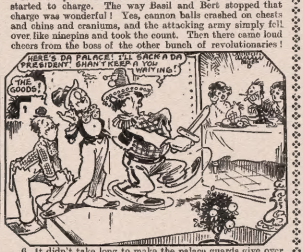


3. It was just at this moment that the troops on t'other side started to charge. The way Basil and Bert stopped that charge was wonderful! Yes, cannon balls crashed on chests and chins and craniums, and the attacking army simply fell over like ninepins and took the count. Then there came loud cheers from the boss of the other bunch of revolutionaries!

4. General Da Custard, the leader of the rebels, dashed up with a happy grin that nearly split his face. Basil only just stopped the old lad from kissing him on both cheeks as he thanked the wanderers for their timely aid. "Viva!" cried the general. "You win-a da scrap! You biff-a da enemy! Me, I like-a your face, senor! I make-a you da president!"



5. Thus did the conquering rebels enter the capital town in triumph. Basil and Bert were given a cordial welcome. At the gates of the city they were presented with the freedom of the saloons and a couple of real Mex dollars in hard cash. Then the general gave the order to march on the president's palace to give that worthy the order of the sack sack. Mps!



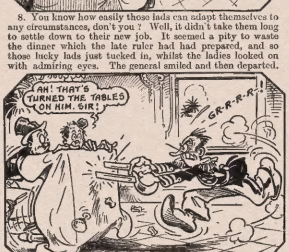
6. It didn't take long to make the palace guards give over and bunk, and the general, accompanied by his new-found war-winners, stalked through the palace in search of the gent who didn't know he wasn't a president now. The old lad, busy at his presidential duties, didn't know what was in store for him until General Da Custard and our lads marched in.

7. "Excuse-a me, ladies!" said the general, seizing the ex-president by the coat-collar. "I make-a da change in da government. One momont!" Then he heaved the late ruler out of the window. "Make-a da go! Do-a da bunk!" he said. "We no more love-a you!" Meanwhile, Basil and Bert introduced themselves to the late president's lady friends.

8. You know how easily those lads can adapt themselves to any circumstances, don't you? Well, it didn't take them long to settle down to their new job. It seemed a pity to waste the dinner which the late ruler had had prepared, and so those lucky lads just tucked in, whilst the ladies looked on with admiring eyes. The general smiled and then departed.

9. But no sooner was Da Custard out of sight, on his visit of inspection of the palace safes; no sooner had Basil and Bert cleared the table of all food and had settled down to be nice and friendly with the ladies; no sooner did all seem plain sailing than the late boss of the republic popped up to see what chance there was of getting his posh job back again.

10. Stealthily did the old lad grab up a couple of meat-carvers from the corner of the room. Then, with one wild roar, he bounded through the window. "Now!" he roared in capital letters. "I do-a da carve, cut-a da slice!" "Hi, hi!" yelled Bert. "Army, army! Where are you?" But the army was too busy celebrating to pay any attention!



11. Something had to be done quickly, and Basil and Bert were the lads to do it! Even as the president charged, those lads threw over the table and stopped his meat-skewers from tickling their waistcoats. "That's turned the tables on him!" chuckled Bert. "He means to try to take the chair at this meeting, sir, but he's failed miserably 'sofa.' Ha, ha!"

12. But our lads weren't quite out of the wood yet! The president person was between them and the open window and they didn't dare risk rushing through the door and getting lost in the palace. "Let's sit on the chandelier, sir!" said Bert as he started to climb. "It will be illuminating to watch him when he starts work again next Saturday! Ha, ha!"

MORE FUN AND EXCITEMENT IN THE PRESIDENT'S PALACE NEXT SATURDAY, CHUMS! DON'T MISS THIS!

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